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JULY 11, 1882.

Mr. THOS. MEEHAN, Vice-President, in the chair.

Thirteen persons present.

A paper was received for publication, through the Botanical Section of the Academy, entitled "On *Rhus cotinoides*," by Dr. Chas. Mohr.

JULY 18, 1882.

Mr. THOS. MEEHAN, Vice-President, in the chair.

Nine persons present.

Nest of Chætura pelagica.—Mr. THOMAS MEEHAN exhibited a nest of the chimney-swallow, or swift, from a chimney in Germantown. It was made of small twigs of the cherry-tree, and fastened together, and to the wall of the chimney by vegetable gum of some kind, indeed, pure gum, undistinguishable in taste and general appearance from the kind which exudes from cherry-trees. He referred to the statement of Audubon, and which has apparently been copied without further question by subsequent authors, that the gum used by the bird in the building of its nest is a salivaceous secretion of its own, and that there are within the mouth of the bird, special organs provided for this secretion. Only for this positive statement of Audubon there would be no question, he thought, that this was cherry-gum, obtained at the same time and place from where the twigs were obtained, namely, the cherry-tree. It was not easy to tell one kind of gum from another in the absence of chemical analysis, but he believed there was no difficulty in distinguishing animal gum from the gum yielded by vegetables. It was inconceivable that an animal should secrete vegetable gum. Still, in view of Audubon's statement, the question was one for anatomists to settle.

It was, he said, worthy of remark that other species of swallow used vegetable gum for nest making. A cave-swallow of Cochin China used a gelatinous seaweed, a species of *Gelidium* not far removed from *Chondrus crispus*, the well-known Irish moss, to make their nests. This formed the so-called edible nests of China. Lamaroux, as quoted by Dr. Peyre Porcher, in his "Medical Properties of Cryptogamous Plants," remarks that far inland the birds employed other material to build their nests, but secured some of the *Gelidium* which they employed to stick the materials together, and fasten the nest to its support. The collecting of vegetable gum for this purpose is expressly conceded in the case of this species.